






20th Anniversary: Minnesota Red River Floods

For many Minnesotans, especially living along the Red River, the spring of 1997 remains an enduring memory of catastrophic, costly flooding. Water as deep as 54 feet spilled three miles inland to flood entire towns. One of the hardest hit communities was East Grand Forks, Minn., where 95 percent of homes were affected by the disaster, and the entire city’s population had to be evacuated due to the rapidly rising waters.

Such a large recovery was hard fought and long-term, requiring the coordination of many to be successful. Local, state and federal agencies, along with voluntary agencies, community organizations, local businesses and residents were all a critical part of the rebuilding process. This table provides a snapshot of how the recovery evolved in East Grand Forks and across the state of Minnesota.

<p>\$9.9 million</p>	<p>More than 4,400 households in East Grand Forks received \$9.9 million in assistance to repair their homes and relocate while those repairs were being made.</p>	 <p>FEMA Director, James Lee Witt, speaking with a flood survivor in East Grand Forks, Minnesota. (Photo by David Saville, FEMA)</p>
<p>\$25.6 million</p>	<p>In the state of Minnesota, residents received more than \$25 million from FEMA’s individual assistance program.</p>	
<p>\$68 million</p>	<p>The Small Business Administration (SBA) provided \$68 million in low-interest loans to residents and businesses in East Grand Forks to further support their rebuilding and recovery efforts.</p>	 <p>Downtown East Grand Forks, Minnesota, with five feet of flooding from the 1997 flood. (Photo by David Saville, FEMA)</p>
<p>\$100 million</p>	<p>\$100 million in SBA loans were approved for applicants throughout the state.</p>	

\$15 million	\$15 million in Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds from FEMA to East Grand Forks to acquire and demolish approximately 400 structures in the floodplain and convert the area to open space.	 <p>Aerial image of homes in East Grand Forks with 15 feet of flood water. (Photo by the city of East Grand Forks)</p>
\$32.4 million	\$32.4 million in mitigation assistance was paid statewide.	 <p>An image showing a mitigated property converted into a park for public use. (Photo by the city of East Grand Forks)</p>
1,400 acres	Various at-risk structures and homes were removed along the Red River in Minnesota with the help of state and federal funding. In their place, 1,400-acres of natural open space known as The Greenway was established. This area includes a campground, trails for walking and biking, parks and shore bank fishing sites.	 <p>An image showing a mitigated property, with a Gazebo, converted into a park for public use. (Photo by the city of East Grand Forks)</p>

<p>\$64 million</p>	<p>FEMA paid \$64 million in public assistance grant funding to the city of East Grand Forks to support the recovery of their infrastructure and critical facilities.</p>	 <p>Trash and debris clog the Red River as it flows under the Kennedy Bridge in East Grand Forks, Minnesota. (Photo by David Saville, FEMA)</p>
<p>\$192 million</p>	<p>\$192 million was paid in public assistance grants to support local and state recovery throughout Minnesota.</p>	 <p>A new city sign for East Grand Forks, Minnesota. (Photo by the city of East Grand Forks)</p>
<p>\$20 million</p>	<p>A \$1.2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce & Minnesota Department of Natural Resources funded the construction of an invisible flood control wall to protect the city from future flooding. As a result, East Grand Forks benefitted from an estimated \$20 million in business investments to area.</p>	